

THE AUGUST MAGAZINES.

"HARPER'S."

The contents of the August number of Harper's Magazine, which we have received from Turner & Co., are as follows:—"The Raquette Club," Charles Hallock, with thirteen illustrations; "South Coast Santerings in England (Saunter VI), Canterbury I," M. D. Conway, with nine illustrations; "My Mocking Bird," Julia C. R. Dorr; "The Electric Light," Jacob Abbott, with six illustrations; "A Visit to Bangkok," Allan D. Brown, with eleven illustrations; "The Auto da Fe of 1765," W. W. Woodson; "Early History of Colorado," William M. Byers; "Two Hearts," Harriet Prescott Spofford; "Frederick the Great—IX. The Campaign of Moravia," with five illustrations; "The Old Love Again," by Annie Thomas, with one illustration; "By-paths to Prosperity," William C. Wycoff; "Played to the End," by the author of "My Daughter Elinor"; "American Artists in Italy," Samuel Osgood, D. D.; "As Easy as Lying," Leonard W. Sewell; "Two Poets," Charles Landor; "Only Clodhoppers," Mrs. Frank McCarty; "Female Suffrage—A Letter to the Christian Women of America (Part I)," Susan F. Cooper; "Anteros," by the author of "Gny Livingston"; "Heart Ache," Carl Spencer; "Editor's Easy Chair," "Editor's Literary Record," "Editor's Scientific Record," "Editor's Historical Record," "Editor's Drawer."

We quote as follows from "By-paths to Prosperity," by W. C. Wycoff:—"In certain trades long apprenticeship is required to confer by practice the requisite taste and skill. But when there is added to the necessity for experience and practice to insure good handiwork the restriction of a salary, the demand for the product of such labor, the craft can comprise but few members, and it may become a monopoly. A branch of the industry over which Saint Crispin presides has recently come into existence, to meet the separate requirements of a class ill-widely removed from saintly patronage. There is now in almost every important city in this country a 'theatrical bootmaker,' and if the statements that have appeared are reliable, the price obtained for the adjuncts to the elegance of the 'buskined stage' is about five times that of the ordinary calf-skin foot-covers."

The addition of genius to the dexterity which is acquired by training may in some occupations convert the artisan into the artist, and by the perfection of handiwork secure the need of fame. Of these, type-cutting and hand-printing, in the early days of those arts, tapestry-work and line-engraving, present familiar examples, and the names of John Baskerville, William Caxton, the Gobein family, and Albert Durer are not likely soon to be forgotten. There is an artist in New York who has developed a peculiar skill in the rare art of cutting cameo. Do you wish the stone to represent your own lineaments or those of your most loved one? Is there a scene, a device, an emblem that is dear to your memory? name your desire, and he will reproduce the likeness in high or low relief, perpetual, in stone. From the actual stiver, from the bust, the photograph, the painting, or perhaps even the pencil-sketch with a few words of description, this man of genius can construct the counterfeited presentment. He, and the admirable artist who has recently furnished the public with silhouettes of marvellous delicacy and singular beauty of outline—the original cuttings of black paper being now copied as engravings and popularized through the agency of the printing-press—are probably not much troubled by competition.

The manufacture of artificial noses is a unique business in which rivalry is not apt to be excessive; and should we pity the person who makes this specialty at a season when his trade is dull, we must yet hesitate to accord him such sympathy as to wish him an increase of customers. A certain studio in the fifth story of a building in Broadway need be better known to the "fancy" than any other rooms in the city where the painter's skill may give to fancy shape. The artist who occupied those premises rarely had in daylight an idle hour; sitters thronged upon him, and waited for their turn with their faces in their handkerchiefs, their hats drawn down over their eyes, or, if of the gentler sex—and there were many such—closely veiled. His especial skill and constant occupation was in painting a natural tint the human countenance, when its divinity was obscured by bruises or by a "black eye."

Of a humbler grade is the "artist" who confines his efforts to repairing the injuries and fractures of meerschaum pipes. There are professional destroyers of vermin who contract by the month or quarter to remove rats, mice, and roaches from hotels, restaurants, etc. Some of these hunters of small deer also furnish live rats in large numbers within twenty-four hours from order, for the exhibitions of dog-pits. They do not keep the rats on hand, but catch them as required. It is generally believed, and is perhaps true, that they use some bait or attractive scent in trapping the vermin. Such is not, however, the explanation as the writer heard it from the lips of one of the most skilled in this vocation. "I never use bait or drugs. I have studied the animal." Here he drew himself up in the consciousness of superior knowledge, and proceeded with a lofty air. "No man that understands the rat needs such things; nor are fancy rat-traps of any account. Look at a rat's nest! It is hid behind a wall. It is near a chimney or a heat flue, so that it is kept warm. It is lined with soft stuff—rags, hair, lint, torn paper. Would you catch rats? Make a nest for them. Use a box having a sliding door to a small aperture. Put rats in the box, or sawdust, or both, and leave it in the warmest part of a room that the rats frequent, covered with an old carpet, the aperture left open. No one must disturb the room; the longer things are thus left the better. There will be a time when you can walk in quietly, drop the sliding door, and carry off the rat under your arm with every rat inside that was in the building."

"At what hour of the day or night do you find all the rats in?" we inquired. "You would not ask the question if you had studied the rat," was the somewhat evasive reply. About once a week a man puts his head into our office, and says "Wanchowdinkmister?" and, not receiving any reply, departs. Some months elapsed before we succeeded in discovering the intent of his inquiry. He is presumably a German, and vends carmine writing fluid to those who apprehend and affirmatively answer his question. "Want you red ink, mister?" A man well known in engraving establishments seems to make his rounds about once a month. The whole point

of his existence is to sell diamond points for engravers' use—one lasting the best part of a lifetime. An industrious individual makes barrel-bungs for a living. A Boston gentleman feathered his own nest by producing wooden nest-eggs. A new commercial business is confined to furnishing oil to be used only on sewing-machines. In Paris an "International Exhibition of Fans" is announced. In New York there is a house exclusively engaged in the manufacture and sale of church furniture. In Boston there is a shop devoted to the sale of glass chimneys for kerosene lamps.

With patience, success in a retail business devoted to a single article is almost certain in a large city. Thus, let a man sell nothing but dolls' heads, keeping his prices well down, and remaining in the same store for years, and although, perhaps, for a long while unnoticed, and strongly tempted to expand his business into a toy shop or a variety store, if persistent in the one idea, he will eventually attract an exclusive trade, and draw customers for dolls' heads from distant quarters; for it is alike the observation of buyers and sellers that the best place to buy an article is that where only that article is dealt in. But if the dealer in the case supposed were to include the bodies, the garments, and the furniture of dolls, he might procure a larger business in the first few years, but with no prospect of ultimate increase or permanency.

The specialties of scientific knowledge give occupation to men possessed of thorough knowledge of peculiar departments. To enumerate these special callings is but to give the designations appropriate to the divisions of science. The professions are similarly pursued in individual lines; and we have patent lawyers and divorce lawyers, cancer doctors, and chiropodists. Of the last there was one who went travelling from house to house before the days when cities hired a "corn doctor" by the year to operate monthly, whose reputation was founded upon an alleged capacity for extracting the roots of corns. After nicely trimming the afflicted feet, he would affect to pull out the said roots with tweezers. He bored a small hole in the corn, and his ledgerman was very neat; but a gentleman on whom he operated kept a "root," and examined it under a microscope. It was a piece of a fish-bone.

With special reference to human frailty, there is a business reduced to a system in Paris, employing a number of discreet deputies, who go around to liquor shops and places of public resort at night, and accompany, or otherwise assist to their homes, for a consideration, inebriated gentlemen, who would otherwise fall into the hands of the police. In that city there is also, at almost every alternate street-corner, that most valuable of messengers, the *commissionnaire*. Licensed, and amenable to strictly-enforced penalties if he overcharges, defrauds, or even blunders, he is yet very serviceable for the occasion, capable, for a reasonable compensation per hour, of the greatest variety of service. He can procure for you a ball-ticket; order your dinner, and summon your company; ascertain the whereabouts of a book in the public libraries or the shops; perhaps even collect a bill or prepare the preliminaries of an *affaire de cour*. He is frequently employed by a jealous husband or wife to follow, and report upon the movements of the suspected party; and occasionally the same agent is hired by both the partners in domestic infelicity.

A business has grown into formidable dimensions within a few years in London which it is impossible to regard with complacency. The nearest approach to it in this country is the Association for the Suppression of Gambling, which, with a worthier motive, adopts somewhat similar means. "Private Inquiry" offices are an invention to the credit of which England is perfectly welcome; and we devoutly hope that nobody on this side of the water will either copy or fringed upon their peculiarities. Employing great numbers of young men and women apparently engaged in other pursuits, as house-servants, clerks, etc., to collect and communicate to a central office all the gossip, scandal, and personalities that they can pick up and acquire in the families or firms where they have such opportunities, these establishments obtain information in vast quantities, which is carefully recorded and tabulated. This information, these family secrets obtained by infamous bribery and espionage, are for sale to these glib-tongued and wide-proceeds in search of evidence when thinking of applying for a divorce. Thither, also, go morbid wretches in search of food for jealousy; partners who doubt each other; employers who suspect their agents. And so widely spread are the ramifications by which this institution has penetrated the privacy of British households, that it is said that an applicant rarely calls at an office without finding that there are at least some details already "booked" respecting the object of his inquiries. But no profit which may accrue to employers or employed can compensate for the utter loss of self-respect involved in such an occupation.

When in literature the subdivisions of industry are placed upon a mere trading basis, singular effects follow. Experience in a restricted avocation results in peculiar skill, and the work of the expert in some branch of literary pursuit is not apt to want dexterity or finish. Yet, whenever the produce of one man's brains is sold to be fathered as another's, whatever benefit each may receive pecuniarily, morally both must be injured. Although for years it has been customary to sell sermons in England, and the practice is alluded to by the poet Cooper, we were not admitted to. More recently their newspapers advertise to furnish their sermons of the mere skeletons of sermons, with illustrations, on subjects selected by the purchaser, or from a general assortment; to be sent by mail on receipt of price. Lecturers also can be similarly supplied with "original MS. lectures." Some of the subjects are thus enumerated in an advertisement:—"Coincidences. Freemasonry—its history, secret rites, and mysteries. Superstitions. Social and Humorous Sketches. Swiss History. Inventors and their Opponents. There is in England a class of reporters who do not themselves write anything for the journals, and are not known as connected with them; they simply collect incidents for others who write descriptive reports.

The French capital is famous for providing literary wares adapted to all exigencies. At the time of the *Exposition Universelle*, there were scribes to be found who could produce light or solid essay upon any topic, division, or article illustrated or exhibited therein, in any language required. One of these literary hacks furnished the complete and exhaustive report upon industries represented in the exhibition which a commissioner from a foreign nation presented to his Government as the result of his own investigation. And this elaborate report, upon which the commissioner was generally complimented, was not only written in his native tongue, but was also an accurate imitation of his usual hand-

writing. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the Pascal-Newton forgeries may be accounted the ripe fruit of so dangerous a vocation. Edgar A. Poe, the poet, had acquired a facility in imitating handwriting which he once turned to account as a practical joke. A lady at Washington left with him her book of autographs, containing those of a large number of celebrated names, with the request that he would add his own. The autographs in the book were scattered through it without any arrangement. Poe kept the book a few weeks, and when he returned it there appeared a duplicate of each autograph upon the page opposite or nearest adjoining. Neither the owner of the book nor any one else was able thereafter to decide which were the genuine autographs and which Poe's fakes.

In her "Letter to the Christian Women of America," Mrs. Susan F. Cooper makes a strong and forcible argument against female suffrage, which is well worthy of the attention of those especially who have only considered the subject from a sentimental and theoretical point of view. Let us suppose that to-day the proposed revolution were effected; all women, without restriction, even the aged, would be summoned to vote in accordance with their favorite theory of inalienable right. That class of women, and other degraded classes of the ignorant and unprincipled, will always be ready to sell their votes many times over—to either party, to both parties, to the highest bidder, in short. They will sell their vote much more readily than the lowest classes of men now do. They will hold it with greater levity. They will trifle with it. They will sell their vote any day for a yard of ribbon or a tin of soap. If, when the polls are opened, two yards of ribbon or two brooches. They will vote over again every hour of every election day, by cunning disguises and trickery. And thus, so far as women are concerned, the most degraded element in society will, in fact, represent the whole sex. Nay, they will probably not unfrequently command the elections, as three colored women are said once to have done in New Jersey. A hundred honest and intelligent women can have but one vote each, and at least fifty of these will generally stay at home. If, with good fortitude, it actually comes to female voting, a very small proportion of the sex will, at common elections, appear at the polls. Avocations more urgent, more natural to them, and in which they are more deeply interested, will keep them away. The degraded women will be there by the scores, as tools of men, enjoying both the importance of the hour, the fun, and the pay. Fifty women, known to be thieves and prostitutes, will hold, at a moderate calculation, say two hundred votes. And, as women form the majority of the resident population in some States, that wretched element of society will, in fact, govern those States, or those who bribe them will do so. Massachusetts, very favorable to female suffrage now, will probably come round to the opinion of New Jersey in former days. Great will be the consumption of cheap ribbons, and laces, and artificial flowers and feathers, and tinsel jewelry, in every town and village about election time, after emancipation is achieved. We are compelled to believe so, judging from our knowledge of the human nature, and the use already made of bribery at many elections. The demagogues will be more powerful than ever. Their work will be made easy for them. It seems, indeed, probable that under the new era our grand national game, of which the most active demagogues of all parties will be the managers. Not that women are more mercenary or more unprincipled than men. God forbid! That would be saying too much. We entirely believe the reverse to be true. But the great use of women can never be made to their deep, a sincere, a discriminating, a lasting interest in the thousand political questions ever arising to be settled by the vote. They very soon weary of such questions. On great occasions they can work themselves up to a state of frenzied excitement over some one political question. At such times they can produce a degree of unreasoning prejudice, of passionate hatred, of blind fury, even beyond what man can boast of. But, in their natural condition, in everyday life, they do not take instinctively to politics as men do. Men are born politicians; just as the boys are born gamblers, and the soldiers and sailors. Not so women. Their thoughts and feelings are given to other matters. The current of their chosen avocations runs in another channel than that of politics—a channel generally quite out of sight of politics; it is an effort for them to turn from one to the other. With men, on the contrary, politics, either directly or indirectly, are closely, palpably, inevitably blended with their regular work in life. They give their attention unconsciously, spontaneously, to politics. Look at a family of children, half boys, half girls; the boys are instinctively of the use already made of bribery at many elections. The demagogues will be more powerful than ever. Their work will be made easy for them. It seems, indeed, probable that under the new era our grand national game, of which the most active demagogues of all parties will be the managers. Not that women are more mercenary or more unprincipled than men. God forbid! That would be saying too much. We entirely believe the reverse to be true. But the great use of women can never be made to their deep, a sincere, a discriminating, a lasting interest in the thousand political questions ever arising to be settled by the vote. They very soon weary of such questions. 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